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amplifier 224 and by an external retroreflector 264. Tunable feedback to control the lasing wavelength is provided by the external cavity which is optically coupled to the anti-reflection (AR) side 228 of the gain medium. The effective reflectivity of the external cavity should be much greater than the residual reflectivity of the AR coated front facet so that the vernier tuned filter 290 can deliver sufficient feedback to put the laser in the "strong feedback" regime. The vernier tuned filter includes in this embodiment, grid generator 246 and the channel selector, e.g., interference filter/etalon 252. The external cavity laser also includes lens 242, channel tuner 254, grid control 248, base 260, output coupling optics 212, and fiber optic 206. The laser amplifier 224 in the embodiment shown is a laser diode. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 9, line 18 with the following rewritten paragraph:

B2

-- The grid generator 246 operates as a filter, e.g., an interference filter with a thickness L_g and index of refraction n_g chosen such that its loss spectrum comprises a multiplicity of minima within the communications band at wavelengths that coincide with the center wavelengths of the selected wavelength grid. More generally the grid generator filter function results in a plurality of passbands centered on each of the gridlines of the selected wavelength grid. (See FIGS. 4 and 5A-C). The grid generator has a finesse that suppresses neighboring modes of the laser between each channel. In this embodiment of the invention the grid generator is an interference element, e.g., a parallel plate solid/gas etalon. The grid generator is precisely dimensioned to have a free spectral range (FSR_{Grid_Gen}) corresponding to the spacing between wavelengths/gridlines of a selected wavelength grid, e.g., an ITU grid (See FIGS. 4 and 5A-C). In this embodiment of the invention the grid generator is fixed to the base 260. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 10, line 19 with the following rewritten paragraph:

B3

-- In this embodiment the channel selector includes a gas or solid etalon 252. The etalon includes opposing planar first and second reflectors which are highly reflective, e.g.,